

Concord Free Public Library – Meeting of the Library Committee  
Tuesday, January 12, 2010 – 7:30 pm – Main Library

Minutes

PRESENT: David Hegarty, Chair, David Holdorf, Paul Dewey, Cristina Blau, Kitsy Rothermel, Bob Baldridge, Melissa Saalfield; Kerry Cronin, Library Director

SPECIAL GUESTS: Karen Ahearn, Children's Librarian and Bob Sekuler, observer, candidate for position as Library Committee member

1. The first order of business was to designate Melissa Saalfield as clerk for the meeting and to approve the minutes from December 8, 2009. The minutes were approved as presented.
2. Introduction of Robert Sekuler. Chair David Hegarty introduced Mr. Sekuler and explained that he (David) and Bob Baldridge will be completing their second three-year terms in May, thereby creating vacancies on the Committee. Mr. Sekuler has expressed strong interest and attended this meeting to get a better understanding of the role and responsibilities of the library committee. He is a professor at Brandeis University and previously worked at Northeastern University and the University of Rochester. Brief discussion followed and it was noted that Elise Woodward is the library representative from the Board of Selectman.
3. Report from Children's Librarian. Karen Ahearn presented an overview of activities in the Library's Children's Department. Among them: adults and children will read Greg Mortensen's book Three Cups of Tea as part of a community reading initiative. There will be a "Pennies for Peace" fundraiser run by the Concord Recreation Department connected to the "Three Cups of Tea" program. Additionally, there will be a public address by David Filipov.

Children involved in the library's reading programs will also participate in the town's 375<sup>th</sup> parade. As part of the 375<sup>th</sup> celebration, David Holdorf suggested young people be encouraged to write essays on what Concord means to them and award prizes. The 375<sup>th</sup> will be observed on September 11, 2010 – a Saturday – complete with concert, fireworks, dancing and more.

Karen and colleagues are working to create a Teen Advisory Board. They hope to recruit 6 – 8 students and meet monthly. Karen explained that she is the children's librarian for the main library; Pat Pluskal serves as children's librarian for Fowler.

Karen announced upcoming programs for the summer to include the evening concerts held on the library front lawn. She also described a program that allows kids to make book recommendations through internet communication. Finally,

she explained a new policy for children visiting the library. Children under 10 years of age may not be left alone in the children's room without an adult – either a parent or caregiver must accompany them.

4. Director's Report. Kerry Cronin began with comments on the library budget, which, she said was on track for this period. At last month's meeting, Kerry had explained that the library might need to cut \$45,000 from its budget. She announced that in view of this possibility, the Library's Board of Trustees voted to contribute an additional \$50,000 for books and materials for FY'11, bringing their total spending for this line item to \$125,000. It is expected that this will be a one-time increase.

She discussed her intention to track staffing patterns over the course of the coming months to determine if there may be areas to adjust staff to different hours/days for greater efficiency and service. Discussion followed. Several committee members noted that the library must fight for its budget in the future and not assume that the Trustees' will always be in a position to offer financial support to make up future shortfalls.

Kerry invited members of the committee to attend a Legislative Breakfast on Friday, February 5 from 8 – 9 am. This will provide an opportunity to meet our elected representatives and staff from the state's board of library commissioners who advocate on behalf of the state's libraries.

Kerry discussed a request from a patron asking that the library remove the book Coming Out Straight by Richard Cohen. After brief discussion, the committee unanimously reaffirmed the American Library Association's Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement and voted to keep the book on library shelves.

Finally, Kerry announced that the Community Preservation Committee recommended the Fowler project receive \$375,000 in CPA funding. The final vote will occur at the spring town meeting. She noted that Fowler is scheduled to close April 26 for construction. The project is expected to take nine months. A groundbreaking will be held May 1, 2010. Limited library services will be available at the Harvey Wheeler Building across the street. The current parking area at Fowler will serve as the construction staging area.

The meeting adjourned. Next meeting – February 9, 2010 – Main Library

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa C. Saalfeld – clerk pro tem

## **Concord Free Public Library Committee**

Minutes of meeting on December 8, 2009, held at Main Library, Director's Office, 7 PM

Present: David Hegarty, Chair  
Kerry Cronin, Library Director  
Members: Melissa Saalfeld, Paul Dewey, Christina Blau,  
Kitsy Rothermel, David Holdorf

Absent: Bob Baldrige

Guest: Carolyn Nie, Director of Technical Services and Technology

Carolyn Nie gave a comprehensive summary of the work of her Department, as follows.

-The staff consists of 4 full-time and 3 part time members, and several volunteers

-Full or partial responsibilities include:

Selection and acquisition of print and non-print library materials

Maintenance of the library database

Book conservation and preservation

Library technology

Web page design and maintenance

Online publication of the e-newsletter

Library staff training

Collection development

Public services including the reference desk

Volunteer training

Friends book sale

Library programming

Maintenance and scheduling of Boston area museum passes

Committee work internal to Concord and outside with Minuteman Network

Public printing

Internal phone, wi-fi, and FAX

-Over 14,000 new items were added to the collection in FY '09. Recent acquisitions are routinely listed in the library website.

-Library website recorded 560,000 page views last year.

-Public wi-fi access is rapidly growing, with currently about 700 users per month.

-Patrons can access their accounts and borrowing history

-Special projects accomplished in the past year include:

Town Energy Efficiency Team

Friends Film Licensing

Midwest Tape

Non-Roman Language Indexing Grant Project

(Thanks to Carolyn for an excellent report.)

Minutes for meeting of November 3, 2009 were approved.

Kerry discussed the protocol for instituting library policies, which should first be approved by the Town Manager before presentation to the Library Committee. In this

regard, Kerry and the Town Manager suggested revisions to the Safe Child Policy previously approved by the Library Committee, and the Library Committee approved these revisions. It was suggested that this policy be communicated to parents at the time of signup for story time. Also, the Direct-to-You Home Delivery Service policy was approved by the Library Committee, as revised by Kerry and the Town Manager.

Kerry announced that local legislators would be hosting a Legislative breakfast on Feb. 5, 2010, at 8 til 9 AM, and all committee members are invited to attend.

Kerry reported that her first monthly newsletter, "Did You Know", was published in the Concord Journal last week.

Kerry reported that the Fowler Capital Campaign now has \$1.8 million, with the Community Preservation Committee request for \$400,000 for historic preservation still pending.

Kerry was informed on this date that the Town Budget must be level-funded, and that \$44,860 must be cut from the FY '11 budget request. In actuality, cuts of approximately \$80,000 must be identified, as a 2% agreed-upon pay raise is not included in level-funding. Since cuts must be identified by Dec. 14, there was an open discussion of possibilities. Most likely candidates include further restrictions on hours of operation. Another possibility is a reassessment of the time period in FY '11 in which Fowler will be closed to the public for construction, with attendant reductions in operating costs. The Fowler portion of the budget in general was discussed, and it was noted that when Fowler reopens with two floors, it will no longer be possible to operate with only 1 staff person on duty, as is now sometimes the case.

Meeting adjourned at 9PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Holdorf, Clerk of the Day